



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

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Submitted by: Henry N. Talmage, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, a statewide nonprofit membership organization representing 5,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis and members of the Environment Committee,

Raised Bill No. 231 AN ACT CONCERNING POLLINATOR HEALTH.

The Connecticut Farm Bureau supports aspects of Raised Bill No. 231 AN ACT CONCERNING POLLINATOR HEALTH and we are concerned about other aspects of the bill. Pollinator health is one of great concern to agriculture and The Connecticut Farm Bureau. The issue is complex and the expertise from experts from various scientific disciplines is needed to properly understand the challenges and the solutions needed to develop appropriate, manageable and effective strategies to improve pollinator health. Therefore, we support the creation of a task force as described in Sec. 5. We believe that all other Sections of the Bill should be referred to the task force for evaluation, analysis and inclusion in the report outlined in Sec.5(g).

Raised bill No. 5383 AN ACT CONCERNING THE FARM VIABILITY MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM AND THE CONNECTICUT FARMLINK PROGRAM.

The Connecticut Farm Bureau supports Raised Bill no. 5383. The bill expands the authority of the Department of Agriculture to fund projects through the farm viability grant program that develop and implement programs and services that promote farm and farmland access and transfer by non-profits and municipalities. The Connecticut Farm Bureau believes this a worthwhile change because of the significant need to farm transition help for farm families and new and expanding farmers. The bill also expands the authority of the Department of Agriculture to work with farmer and landowners who intend to “lease or otherwise transfer their farm” instead of just “sell” their land as outlined under the current statutes. The bill also expands the authority of the Department of Agriculture to take a more active role in facilitating outreach and contact between interested farm owners and farm seekers. It also allow the Department of Agriculture to create partnerships and the use of third-party entities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Farm Link program. The Connecticut Farm Bureau supports the changes outlined in Raised Bill No. 5383 because they will enable the Department of Agriculture to facilitate more successful farm transfers between farm owners and farm seekers and reduce to loss of farms and farmland to development in Connecticut.